

Beyond *the* BASICS

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Motorcycle Safety

Many people enjoy riding motorcycles for recreational fun or simply getting around. Unfortunately, there is a growing trend in the number of motorcycle fatalities and accidents each year, making motorcycle safety a real concern for riders. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that motorcyclists injured in crashes have increased by 100 percent from 1998 to 2007. Read on for some basic tips to help you arrive at your destination...safely.

Causes of Motorcycle Accidents

- Motorists fail to see riders when they are coming out of a driveway, making a left turn in front of an oncoming rider or when the motorcycle is in the driver's "blind spot."
- Many riders do not obtain the proper motorcycle license and training to learn how to properly operate the bike. Of those who do get licensed, many only learn enough to pass the test.
- Riders speed excessively while also weaving in and out of traffic lanes.
- Riders are under the influence of drugs or alcohol—the cause of almost half of all motorcycle accidents.



Safety First

- Do not tailgate or weave between lanes if traffic is slow.
- Abide by traffic laws, just like motorists are expected to do.
- Minimize the noise coming from your bike by using a muffler and keeping your radio volume down.
- Always use turn signals to warn motorists of your intentions.

How Can Riders Remain Safe?

- Attend motorcycle training courses and get a license specifically for a motorcycle.
- Always wear a **helmet**; eye protection; a jacket made of denim, nylon or leather; long pants; boots and gloves.
- Do not drink alcohol or use drugs while operating a motorcycle.
- Read the owner's manual and learn the capabilities and operations of the vehicle.
- Practice using the controls and gears by sitting on the bike while it is off and parked.
- Follow posted speed limits.
- Turn on your headlights all the time, even when it is sunny.
- Look out for hazards such as potholes, cracks and bumps in the road.
- Exercise extreme caution when you are carrying passengers and always have them wear a helmet, too.

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